

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method for structuring a group of companies comprising the steps of:
 - assembling a core foundry class including a group of core foundry individuals associated with a foundry entity, the core foundry individuals including at least one first core foundry individual for providing overall corporate management guidance, at least one second core foundry individual for providing technical expertise, at least one third foundry individual for providing marketing expertise and at least one fourth foundry individual for providing legal expertise;
 - 10 assembling a plurality of member companies for development by the foundry entity;
 - providing financial assistance from the foundry entity to each of the member companies;
 - 15 determining, for each of the member companies, areas of expertise that the member company does not have, including technical, marketing and legal areas of expertise;
 - assigning, for each member company in each area of expertise that the member company does not have, at least one individual from the core foundry class to assist in providing that expertise to the member company; and
 - 20 growing the member companies by providing active participation by each of the individuals in the core foundry class in each of the member companies to which the core foundry class individual has been assigned.
2. A method according to claim 1, further including the step of assembling a technical advisory board for each of the member companies, the technical advisory board being assembled by the foundry entity and the respective member company.
3. A method according to claim 2, wherein each technical advisory board contains at least one member who is not employed by the foundry, not employed by the

member company, and has at least one of managerial and executive experience in the industry being targeted by the company.

4. A method according to claim 1, wherein a group of the member companies has a similar technical or market orientation.
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5. A method according to claim 4, wherein at least two of the core foundry individuals have backgrounds consistent with the similar of technical market orientation.
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6. A method according to claim 4, where the similar technical orientation is communications.
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7. A method according to claim 6, wherein the similar technical orientation is broadband communications.
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8. A method according to claim 7, wherein the second core foundry individual has a background in broadband communications, and at least two other core foundry individuals have a background in broadband communications.
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9. A method according to claim 1, wherein one of the core foundry individuals initially sits on the board of directors for each of the member companies.
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10. A method according to claim 1, further comprising the step of:
when the services of one of the core foundry individuals is no longer needed by a particular member company, reassigning the core foundry individual to assist another member company in the field of expertise of the core foundry individual.

11. A method according to claim 1, wherein the step of providing active participation includes negotiating a license on behalf of at least one of the member companies and aggregating vendor discounts.

5 12. A method according to claim 1, wherein the step of providing active participation includes assisting in the development of product specifications.

10 13. A method according to claim 1, wherein the step of providing active participation includes assisting in the construction of an integrated circuit using integrated circuit design tools.

15 14. A method according to claim 1, further comprising the steps of:
 licensing intellectual property among the foundry entity and a group of at least one member company to increase the group of member companies' chance of success in the marketplace.

20 15. A method for building a group of member companies comprising the steps of:
 reviewing a number of business plans including internal plans based on ideas from foundry entity personnel and external plans based on ideas from non-foundry personnel;

25 determining the most likely of the business plans to be successful;
 assisting in the creation of member companies based at least in part on the most likely business plans, the member companies forming a first group of companies;
 periodically reviewing the progress of the member companies and entering data related to the progress thereof in a computer, the data forming a first group of progress values;

 comparing the progress of the member company against metrics and creating a comparison value, where at least one of the metrics is based at least in part on the first group of progress values; and

taking actions to assist the member company based at least in part on the comparison values.

16. A method according to 15, further comprising the steps of:

5 collecting information on each of the member companies related to their status in a number of categories;

periodically reviewing the business plans of the member companies compared to predetermined internal targets relative to each member company;

10 wherein the comparing step includes the step of comparing the progress of the member company against metrics in a plurality of categories and creating comparison values, at least one of the metrics based at least in part on the first group of progress values;

15 providing feedback to the member companies to suggest modifications to the business plans of the member companies to reach the predetermined internal targets and creating updated internal targets; and

measuring the progress of each of the member companies against the updated internal targets.

17. A method according to 16, further comprising the steps of:

20 providing external feedback to the companies to suggest modifications to the business plans of the companies to reach the predetermined internal targets and creating updated internal targets; and

measuring the progress of each of the companies in a plurality of categories against the updated internal targets.

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18. A method according to 16, wherein:

the comparing step includes comparing the progress of the member company against ideal progress metrics, and comparing the progress of the member company against other member companies' metrics.

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19. A method according to 16, further comprising the steps of:
licensing intellectual property among the foundry entity and a group of at least
one member company to increase the group of member companies' chance of success in
the marketplace.

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20. A software structure executable on a processor for gathering data on a variety of
member companies in a foundry system, storing the data in a memory, monitoring
the progress of the member companies and reporting the progress of the member
companies, comprising:

10 a control program configured to be executed by the processor and to provide for
the receipt of data relative to a foundry entity and attributes of a plurality of member
companies in a plurality of categories;

an input routine configured to receive data relative to the foundry entity and
attributes of a plurality of member companies in a plurality of categories;

15 a storage routine coupled to the input routine and configured to store the data in a
predetermined format;

a retrieval routine configured to retrieve the data; and

20 a communication routine coupled to the retrieval routine and configured to
communicate the data to a user in one of a plurality of formats.

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21. A software structure according to 20, for further reporting the progress of the
member companies against predetermined metrics, where the memory includes
stored data relative to at least one benchmark, wherein:

25 the attributes relative to the member companies include progress values, the data

forming a first group of progress values; and

the storage routine is configured to store the first group of progress values as at
least a portion of the stored data; and

the structure further comprises:

- a benchmark retrieval routine configured to retrieve at least one benchmark from the memory, where at least one benchmark is based at least in part on the first group of progress values; and
 - a comparison routine configured to compare the data relative to attributes of a partner company against at least one benchmark and generate comparison data; and
 - a communication routine coupled to the comparison routine and configured to communicate the comparison data to a user in one of a plurality of formats.
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